

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise !

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

N E W SF L A S H E S

December 1,

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EXHIBITION OF FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS: The December Loan Exhibition will celebrate the third anniversary of the opening of the Gallery and will be one of the most important of the year. Assembled by Harold Woodbury Parsons, it will be devoted to French Impressionist Landscape Paintings and will include sixty outstanding canvases. It will open on Sunday, November 29th and will continue until the end of December.

The work of Claude Monet, the recognized leader of the Impressionist group, will be featured and he will be represented by twenty-four paintings. Unquestionably one of the most revolutionary influences in French painting of the last part of the nineteenth century, Monet was born in Le Havre in 1840, the son of a grocer. While he studied with both Troyon and Gleyre, the greatest impulses in his art came from Boudin, Manet, and Jongkind. His earliest essays were seascapes done on the Channel coast with Boudin and Jongkind, and with them he was able to persuade his family to send him to Paris for formal study.

The chance attendance at Manet's one man show in 1863 turned him momentarily from landscapes to figures, and in 1866 he painted the superb "Camille" now in Bremen and the "Dejeuner" in Frankfort, both of which, except for a certain dryness, might have come from the hand of the painter of "Olympia". From now on he exhibited with Manet, Renoir, Pissarro, and their friends and shared with them their lack of appreciation and encouragement. The War of 1870 drove him from France and he went to Holland where he accidentally discovered Japanese Prints which always had a strong compositional influence on his work. Later he went to London with Pissarro and painted the Thames for the first time and became acquainted with Turner's great masterpieces of light and colour.

By 1883 he had achieved enough importance to be given a one-man show by Durand-Ruel, and the success of this venture enabled him to buy a house at Giverny where he spent the rest of his life, and where he painted some of his loveliest canvases. As early as 1886 he was exhibited in New York and the following year in Boston. Here he was immediately popular and his work not only influenced many American artists to go to Paris to study, but his early canvases were bought by the dozens and still may be found in American museums and private collections.

Monet was now a much sought after and prosperous artist and the number of canvases he achieved is formidable. He continued to paint until 1918 when his eyesight failed and he lived until 1926. The present very comprehensive exhibition will illustrate that Monet did not develop his very personal style until the 'eighties, and when he was over forty. The most significant artist in the purely Impressionist group, that is, those painters who sought to give a momentary impression of nature with the brilliancy of her colours and the effect of light and atmosphere, Monet in no way began the movement. This honor must go to Manet, who carried on the work of Titian, Velazquez, some of the French 18th century painters, and the English landscapists. Monet did make it a more personal manner, and by concentrating on the problem of light, by restricting his palette to the colours of the spectrum, and eliminating blacks and browns, he achieved the shimmering brilliancy and almost gay charm of his canvases.

His concern with the problem of light and atmosphere, with the eventual exclusion almost of colour, resulted in a loss of substance and at times even of pattern and paved the way for the return to classicism and architectural form on the part of Cézanne, who stated so definitely his aim - "We must make of Impressionism something solid like the art of the museums".

December 1, 1936

Many of Monet's early paintings were done in the open air, but after 1892 he realized, as have many other artists, that it is only safe to sketch in the open, due to the violence of the light. From that time on he worked over all his canvases in the studio and his "Rouen Cathedral" and "Thames" series were painted from windows. In spite of his loss of form, Monet's contribution in the field of colour and of interpreting nature is so great that he will always be one of the most significant of the French nineteenth century geniuses.

The earliest canvas in the group, "Ste. Adresse", is dated 1865 and is lent by Durand-Ruel. Particularly fine is the "Beach at Ste. Adresse", dated 1867, lent by the Chicago Art Institute and showing a strong Manet feeling in the qualities of the blacks. Of especial interest will be one of the artist's largest early canvases, "The Jetty at Le Havre" which illustrates his admiration for Boudin, and which the Bignou Galleries are sending from London where it has just been featured in a large exhibition.

Louis-Eugene Boudin, who gave Monet his first palette and brushes and allowed him to accompany painting excursions to the beaches near Le Havre, will be represented by twelve canvases. Born at the little port of Harfleur in 1824, he was the pupil of Corot and it was he who called Boudin the "master of the sea and the king of the skies". Aside from the charm of his seascapes with their wide expanse of sky and calm water, he is important as the link between the Barbizon school and the Impressionists. He was the son of a sea captain and his love for the busy ports, the bathing beaches with their gay crowds and the long flat shore lines was understandable. More than any other artist he painted by tone values, that is, reducing the colour to a system of tinted grays that are always silvery, opalescent and luminous. He was nearer to Corot than to the Venetians, but can be likened to Guardi in his ability to represent atmosphere-drenched salt air.

One of his largest and most important paintings, "The Beach at Trouville" is being lent by the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan and Cleveland are sending fine examples, as is the Brooklyn Museum. The lovely "Entrance to the Port of Le Havre" which was the key picture in a recent exhibition in New York, is being lent by Durand-Ruel and a second port scene is coming from the collection of Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan.

Pissarro and Sisley who rank next in importance to Monet in the Impressionist group will each be represented by six canvases, which will cover their several periods. Both Manet and Renoir were associated with the same group and examples of their landscapes painted in the open air will be included. To round out the exhibition, Degas, Guillaumin, Morisot, Maufra, André, Marquet, and Bonnard will also be shown.

The exhibition, certainly the most important in the Impressionist field which has ever been held in Kansas City, has been assembled through the generosity of the above museums and collectors, with additional works lent by Mr. Ralph M. Coe, Mr. W. H. Crocker, Mrs. H. P. Russell, Carroll Carstairs Gallery, M. Knoedler & Co., Kraushaar Galleries, Pierre Matisse, Paul Reinhardt Galleries, Jacques Seligmann & Co., Robert C. Vose Gallery, and Wildenstein & Co.

On Tuesday afternoons at three o'clock during the period of the exhibition, special lectures will be given in the Loan Galleries by Mr. Gardner or Mr. Wittmann.

WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURES: Of special interest will be the Wednesday Evening Lecture for December 2nd when Mr. Harold Woodbury Parsons, who assembled the exhibition, will speak on French Impressionist Landscape Paintings. The lecture will be illustrated by canvases from the exhibition which will be brought down to the Atkins Auditorium from the loan galleries and should be most instructive. As usual on this evening the Gallery will be open from seven to ten and there is no charge for either admission or for the lecture.

On Wednesday evening, December 9th, Mr. Gardner will give the second of a series of talks on the History of Furniture and the Decorative Arts, discussing the Gothic period. Interesting structural

December 1, 1937

changes took place in this style, first in architecture and then in furniture, and it is from this period that the beginning of our modern domestic decoration begins. An attempt is made in these lectures to give a background of the time and the civilization that produced the furniture, and they are illustrated with both slides and examples from the Gallery collection.

The third of this series will be given on Wednesday Evening, December 16th, when Mr. Gardner will speak on the Renaissance. Begun as a conscious copying of the classicism of Imperial Rome, it revived many of the earlier forms and decorative motifs and is contemporary with the supremacy of Florence under the Medici. The Gallery is very fortunate in having in its collection a number of fine examples from this period which will be used to illustrate the lecture.

On Wednesday Evenings, December 23rd and 30th, the Gallery will be open as usual, but there will be no lectures. These will be resumed on January 6th.

MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH: For the Christmas Season and the month of December, the Masterpiece will be the beautiful wooden statue of the Madonna and Child that came to the Gallery from the famous Von Nemes Collection.

Carved in the full round and painted, it comes from the vicinity of Basle and dates from the end of the 15th century when German art was strongly influenced by the Italian Renaissance. This is seen in the undraped Christ Child whose body is fuller and rounder and who for the first time assumes the appearance of a baby. Touches of the Gothic still remain in the voluminous and crisply cut drapery and in the angular hands of the Madonna. Her oval face is of the type seen in some of Schongauer's prints, and carries on the tradition of Teutonic realism in that it is not idealized but has features that might be met even today in Southern Bavaria. For the first time, too, we meet the more human aspect of the relationship of the Madonna and the Child which was also a concept of the Renaissance, and which is seen in the way the Virgin holds the foot of the Child.

One of the finest sculptures of this period in America, the featuring of it as Masterpiece will call attention to its importance.

PRINT EXHIBITIONS: Beginning December 15th, Galleries XV and XVI will be hung with a comprehensive group of the work of the great French etcher of the 19th century, Felix Buhot. The exhibition will be under the auspices of the Print Club.

Buhot is too rarely seen, and this exhibition will offer an opportunity to study almost his entire oeuvre. Tribute has been paid him by the sensitive critic, Arsene Alexandre; "Certain souls there are who, like precious jewels, are rarely shown....A very few people have seen them, have admired them, but the multitude will trample the earth that covers them. Nevertheless, they have fulfilled their mission of beauty. Buhot was one of these souls."

The group of Italian and German prints from the permanent collection will continue on exhibition until December 15th.

THE FRIENDS OF ART: The lectures on contemporary art for the Friends of Art have begun again and are being well attended. The next meeting will be held on Friday morning, December 4th, at eleven o'clock in the Atkins Auditorium, when Mr. Gardner will talk on the current exhibition of French Impressionist Landscape Paintings. The lecture will be illustrated with the canvases from the group which will be brought to the auditorium.

On Friday morning, December 11th, the meeting will be held at the same time in the Library and Mr. Gardner will discuss current exhibitions in New York of modern paintings.

It is the hope of the Selections Committee to present to the members a group of paintings for their consideration in the next few weeks, and announcement of this will be made later.

December 1, 1936

THE PRINT CLUB: The monthly meeting of the Print Club will be held on Monday Evening, December 14th at 8 o'clock in the Atkins Auditorium. At this time Mr. Sickman will speak on the influence of Japanese Prints on western artists. Europe saw these very distinctive prints for the first time in the 'sixties and the 'seventies and such artists as Manet, Degas, Monet, Toulouse-Lautrec and Whistler were strongly influenced by them.

The Print Club has extended an invitation to all members of the Friends of Art to attend this meeting.

CHINESE PORTRAIT PAINTINGS: On December 7th, Gallery XXV will be installed with a group of Portraits by Chinese artists from the permanent collection. Most of these paintings have never been displayed before and so present for the first time an opportunity to the Gallery visitors to become acquainted with this thoroughly delightful and little known side of Chinese painting. There are two distinct types in the collection: one is made up of the so-called "ancestor portraits", paintings which were made after the death of the subject and intended to be hung in the ancestral temple, they are usually very formal and characterized by a striking almost geometric pattern; the second group are the portraits made during the sitter's lifetime. These paintings are much more free and informal than the "ancestor portraits" and more interesting from a human point of view. Generally the artist has attempted to show as much of the subject's character in the setting as in the actual features of the face, thus we find the scholar in his library, the poet in his garden, the old lady sitting quietly with her tea and pipe.

Most of these paintings are of the eighteenth century when such conversation pieces or informal portraits were much in favor at court. It is interesting to note also that we find a good deal of European influence in the minute and careful rendering and the introduction of shading. Much of this style may be traced to Italian Jesuit painters such as Castiglione who were very popular at the court of the Ch'ing dynasty emperors. The Gallery is fortunate in possessing several important paintings of this type, notably a large painting of Prince Kuo Ch'in, son of the emperor K'ung Hsi, and a most interesting portrait of his brother who later became the Emperor Yung Cheng.

THE LOOSE COLLECTION: Two cases of jewelry from the Loose Collection have been placed in the East Corridor of the second floor. Included are fine examples of Etruscan Gold Work, necklaces and religious objects from Europe and a selection of Oriental jewelry and ornaments.

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS: A number of very important and much needed books have been added to the Library through the generous and anonymous gift which was made to that department this summer. It is hoped that more gifts may be made to this very necessary fund.

REMBRANDT'S NIGHT WATCH: The very fine copy of Rembrandt's Night Watch from the Western Gallery Collection has been placed on exhibition in Gallery XXVII. It will be of especial interest in view of the forthcoming moving picture based on the life of the great Dutch master.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: The Children's Masterpiece of the Week, which is displayed on the ground floor near the foot of the Atkins Stairway, is attracting a great deal of interest. The best drawings and examples of modelling or craft work from the various Saturday morning classes are shown here each week.

There will be no Saturday morning classes during the holiday season, that is, December 26th and January 2nd.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERTS: The Gallery is happy to announce that there will be a concert at three-thirty o'clock each of the first three Sundays in December in the Atkins Auditorium.

On December 6th, the Madrigal Club, under the direction of Mr. George Harold Miller, will present a program of folk songs and modern madrigals. On December 13th, the Music Department of the Athenaeum will present "Slumber Songs of the Madonna" by May Strong and on December 20th Sigma Alpha Iota musical sorority will give the regular monthly concert.

December 1, 1936

VISITORS: The Gallery was host to Mrs. Roosevelt on Sunday afternoon, November 15th. She spent two hours viewing the collection and was especially interested in the Japanese Textiles and in the American Wing with its fine examples of early Colonial furniture.

Dr. Axel Gauffin, Director of the National Museum of Stockholm, spent two days visiting the Gallery recently. He expressed surprise at the many superlative paintings in the collection and at the high quality of the Oriental Department.

The Gallery was included in the tour which the Governors recently made of Kansas City. Especially interested was Governor Greene of Rhode Island who spent several hours studying our Chinese paintings, as he is a well-known collector in this field and one of the Trustees of the Rhode Island School of Design.

AFTERNOON GALLERY TALKS: The Tuesday afternoon lectures during the month of December will be devoted to the loan Exhibition of French Impressionist Landscape Paintings and will be given at three o'clock in the loan galleries. During the rest of the week the regular schedule will be followed at the usual time, two o'clock.

Tues., Dec. 1	- 3 p.m.	- French Impressionist Landscape Painting
Wed., " 2	- 2 "	- American Wing Miss Jackson
Thurs., " 3	- 2 "	- Masterpiece of the Month - Mr. Wittmann
Fri., " 4	- 2 "	- Oriental Rugs - Miss Hughes
Tues., " 8	- 3 p.m.	- French Impressionist Landscape Painting
Wed., " 9	- 2 "	- American Portraits - Miss Jackson
Thurs., " 10	- 2 "	- Classical Art --Mr. Wittmann
Fri., " 11	- 2 "	- Tapestries - Miss Hughes
Tues., " 15	- 3 p.m.	- French Impressionist Landscape Painting
Wed., " 16	- 2 "	- Renaissance Textiles - Miss Jackson
Thurs., " 17	- 2 "	- Felix Buhot Prints - Mr. Wittmann
Fri., " 18	- 2 "	- Persian Pottery - Miss Hughes
Tues., " 22	- 3 p.m.	- French Impressionist Landscape Painting
Wed., " 23	- 2 "	- American Glass - Miss Jackson
Thurs., " 24	- 2 "	- American Indian Weaving - Mr. Ellis
Fri., " 25	-	Christmas Day - Gallery Closed All Day
Tues., " 29	- 3 p.m.	- French Impressionist Landscape Painting
Wed., " 30	- 2 "	- American Wing - Miss Jackson
Thurs., " 31	- 2 "	- American Indian Baskets and Pottery - Mr. Ellis